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THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE—PARTY-UNITY—THE SOUTH ON THE DEFENSIVE.

SPEECH

OF

HON. AUGUSTUS E. MAXWELL,
OF FLORIDA,

DELIVERED IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, JANUARY 27, 1857.

25/10
The House being in Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union—

Mr. MAXWELL said:

Mr. CHAIRMAN, I dislike, at this stage of the session, to interrupt the legitimate business before us, and perhaps I do wrong to continue the discussion of general subjects. I would not risk this, were it at all probable that such discussion would cease if I refrained. As it is not, and I have been unfortunate in my efforts to obtain the floor, and as the example has been set me by others, I may as well say now what I could not get an opportunity to say at the proper time.

I have wished to notice some comments upon the President and his message, though I will not follow the gentleman from Maryland, [Mr. DAVIS,] or others, in discussing at large the proprieties of the message, its history, reasoning, or conclusions.

So far as these relate to the agitation which has recently convulsed the country, I am satisfied with it in every particular. My confidence in the man, or his views, has not been shaken. The admirable exposition he has given of the state of the Union, could not have been but incomplete if he had ignored the controversy which has filled the minds of all the people for the last few months, and which was itself full of threatening against the peace and security of the country. He was forbid, by every sign around him, to regard it as a mere party controversy, with which a President should not deal. It had risen to an awful magnitude of danger, alarming every patriot in the land. That he should have touched it, therefore, set it forth before us, explained his own policy in regard to it, was most natural, and scarcely to be avoided. That he should have done this in other spirit or terms than those characterizing the message, could not have been expected by any one familiar with his political opinions and previous public action. He had no need to sugar his words to suit the tastes of those whose taking offense was a predetermined, inevitable thing. A grave subject was before him, and it imposed

a sterner duty than trifling niceties of speech in deference to the tender feelings of opposing partisans. That duty he performed; and in this, as ever before, he has been a man true alike to himself and to his country—consistent, right-minded, honestly patriotic. Undaunted by difficulties, undissolved by the pretended commiseration of his enemies, unshaken by the loss of favor, or by the taunts of those who preyed upon his supposed misfortunes to satiate their vengeful appetites, he has steadily pursued his course; sometimes, it may be, mistaken as to the right path, at others misled, but always going on, determined to reach at last a proper destination. It is not only as a southern representative, it is as one having an equal regard for every portion of the Union, and every interest in it, that I honor him, and thank him for his firm adherence to the cause of the Constitution, and for his zealous advocacy of the rights it secures, and his bold defense of those rights against powerful assaults.

It may be well enough for some gentlemen to express indifference as to his views, or even pity for his weakness as a fallen man; but it cannot have escaped observation, that while they do this they exhibit a sensitiveness under his exposure quite incompatible with either. If we may judge from the many efforts we have witnessed, from that of the chairman of your leading committee, [Mr. CAMPBELL, of Ohio,] and that of the gentleman from Maryland, [Mr. DAVIS,] down to that of the gentleman from Ohio, who last addressed you, [Mr. BLISS,] to parry the force of his message, we are not permitted to regard it as the weak twaddle of a dishonored or dying man. There must be something in it of life, of vigor, of power—something to alarm and stir the energy of opposition, or else it would have gone unquestioned to our committees and our printer. But that would not do. It had to be arrested until his opponents could exhaust their wrath in its denunciation—until they could hack and bathe its core to acquit their fears. They are engaged, as I am glad to believe, in a vain labor. It has its place on the record, and will tell its story of

justice to all men, of faithfulness to all the country, unto the people everywhere. That he correctly apprehends and sets forth the meaning of the recent election I hold to be most evident—his main deduction being that the geographical or sectional party of the country was condemned. This is unquestionably true. And I believe it to be also true, that the party which was upheld in the possession of the Government, and authorized to continue its control, was the one which most fully recognizes the equality of the States, and the equal rights of their respective citizens. A policy which can suit every portion of the Union, as opposed to that which advances one portion at the expense of the other—a policy not so much of action, as of abstinence from action, and one which cannot provoke a complaint of aggression from either side, because it holds itself denied the exercise of any power to favor or to interfere with either, was “sanctioned and announced” as the right policy.

But it is not my purpose to undertake a detailed defense either of the President or his message. I am willing, and I am sure he may well be willing, that through any the worst present ordeal, both may pass to their proper places in the history of the country. As yet, the message has encountered little more than the broadest contradiction, with only the idliest hypercriticism; and I must say that that of the gentleman from Maryland [Mr. DAVIS] was of a kind better suited to some other forum than to this body of which it is his fortune to be a foremost member. He seems to exult in the idea that the complacency of the President in his references to the result of the recent election is not warranted by the majority of the popular vote. Can it be that my friend objects to the congratulatory strain in which the President speaks of the defeat of sectionalists? Or does he permit a passing allusion to the defeat of his own party to cheek the current of his satisfaction at the overthrow of the greatly stronger party whose narrow organization he himself so sternly condemned? Sir, I ask him what he has gained when he has shown that the fact disclosed by the recent election is that the majority of the people of the United States is opposed to the present men in power, opposed to the present Administration, opposed to continuing its policy, opposed to the Kansas-Nebraska act, opposed to divers other things said to be held in favor by the Democratic party, of which he made mention? The same process by which he arrives at this conclusion certainly shows that an overwhelming majority of the people is opposed to the men and the measures of the Republican party; and probably he will admit that it also shows the majority not just yet disposed to trust the men or the measures of the American party. What, then, has he gained? Why, simply that the majority of the intelligent, self-governing American people is opposed to all men and to any policy, and that this glorious country of ours is brought to a stand-still. I think, Mr. Chairman, that my reasoning is as good as his, and equally suits the gravity of a statesman, when it brings me to the conclusion that we are led out of the difficulty in which he thus places us by the Constitution; and therefore, although that the Democratic party is continued in power, the Constitution really elected our can-

didate. With such indorsement and warrant, he should not complain if that party thinks itself still empowered to carry on the Government after its old habit.

In a right view of the nature of our Government, the popular will—the only popular will we are permitted to regard—must be admitted as having decidedly favored the choice of Mr. Buchanan, and, through him, the continuance of Democratic policy. It is not simply that he received more votes than either of the other candidates, or that he received a majority of the States. It is that a majority of the people of the United States, through the only mode by which we can constitutionally ascertain their will, is committed to a preference for him over all others. Does the gentleman ask how I reach this result? I answer him, by regarding this, not as a consolidated, but as a Federal Government. There is no such will to be recognized as that of the majority of the whole people. We must go to the States in search of the true popular will, for it is only through them, each expressing the will of her own people, separate and independent of all the others, that we can correctly arrive at it. Maryland, in casting her vote for Mr. Fillmore, informs us that the will of her people would make him President; and that must be taken as not merely what the majority would do, but as the will of all. And so of the other States. Now, taking the rule thus indicated to guide our calculations—summing up the aggregate vote of the States which preferred Mr. Buchanan, and giving all the others to his opponents, he will be elected by some two hundred and fifty thousand majority. And herein, sir, may be found, for all those who need it, a lesson in the philosophy, and frame and working of our institutions, which it would be well for us to understand and appreciate, but which the errors of a latitudinarian construction of the Constitution have too often and too much obscured. I doubt not Mr. Buchanan will be able to gather instruction from it which will serve to console him for that condemnation in advance which the gentleman from Maryland so unkindly flaunts in his face.

But the remarks of the gentleman I wish to notice more particularly, were those exposing, as he imagined, the fatal want of unity in the Democratic party. In this connection I will say, I have listened with some degree of anxiety to the discussion which has been going on in reference to the late political canvass, and its result. I have felt anxiety because when it is charged, and the impression is sought to be made upon the country, that the northern wing of the Democratic party obtained its large vote through deceitful practices, by which the people were led to believe that it was a good Free-Soil party, a question is raised, a doubt suggested, about something which I thought had been fully put to rest by every form of contradiction, spoken, written, and acted. What I had heard from the prominent men of that wing of the party, what I had read from their pens, the votes I had seen them give, and all their recent action when the subject of slavery was involved, had convinced me that, so far from entertaining Free-Soil views, or wishing them adopted by Congress, they held in the main a sound constitutional position—certainly much sounder than any taken by other parties of the

same section, if tried by the same tests. Their ready and enthusiastic acceptance of the principles announced in the Cincinnati platform on this subject, which were satisfactory to the southern people, could but confirm this conviction. The sort of man they so zealously supported for the Presidency, whose avowed, well-known principles, and whose whole career, prominently recorded, marked him as one not at all disposed to countenance Free-Soil agitation in any shape, left no room for suspicion or distrust of them. Besides this, the very basis of opposition to them, the very charge upon which they were arraigned for condemnation, the one very thing which was urged as their crime, by the heterogeneous Republican party, was, that they belonged to a pro-slavery party.

If, after all this, the boldness with which the Democratic party have been accused by both Republicans and Americans—in fraternal union still when the work of war upon the Democratic party is to be undertaken—should have caused some anxiety, who will say that what we have since heard from the accused themselves is not sufficient to remove it? For one, the gentleman from Maryland says that; but the incredulous ear takes in a plain story reluctantly. There are none so deaf as those who will not hear. That between Democrats there is a difference of opinion on some points, as he urges, is undeniably true; but that this difference leads to any different policy on the part of Congress, is just as undeniably untrue. And this is the point which gentlemen obstinately refuse to look at, or else they could not be so mistaken in their view of Democratic organization. For instance, while some hold slavery to be an evil, and doubtless so declare unreservedly, and others hold a contrary belief, yet they agree perfectly as to the duty upon Congress to abstain from interference with it. So, too, while some advocate what is called "squatter sovereignty," and others oppose it, yet there is no difference between them as to what shall be the action of Congress; for the "squatter sovereignty" doctrine concedes the essential point insisted upon by its opponents, that the question of slavery in the Territories is one not within the sphere of congressional action. Now, the man who sees that in Federal politics we organize parties and announce principles in reference only to Federal measures, will see that, notwithstanding the differences mentioned, there can be, as there really is, a true unity of action. Their difference is of that kind which their agreement in constitutional doctrine as to the powers of Congress puts entirely out of the way. That difference cannot be reached but by overriding this fundamental doctrine. While the doctrine stands, it cannot go into the sphere to which the national party holding it belongs, and hence can never be an operating difference in that sphere. Elsewhere it might be otherwise. In the sphere of territorial politics, it would produce conflict. But while we hold that this latter sphere shall not be entered by the national Democratic party, organized with reference to Federal objects alone, it can cause no conflict, nor lead to the divisions which our opponents so industriously insist should destroy us.

The true explanation of the unity of the Democratic party, notwithstanding the diversities of

opinion alleged against it, is, that it is neither a pro-slavery nor an anti-slavery party. It holds that whatever may be the opinion of this man or that man in reference to slavery, the Constitution forbids him to thrust that opinion upon the theater of the Federal Government. He must be content with private indulgence of his views, so far as every State or Territory but his own may be affected; though in this, whether State or Territory, he is at liberty, and it is his duty as an intelligent citizen, to exercise those views, when he may properly do so, as he may deem best for the local good. But outside of that, when acting in connection with those of other States and Territories, where the citizen has the same privilege that he in his enjoys, he must leave the subject to be dealt with as those locally interested may prefer. Mark the simplicity of the distinction. A local Government for local purposes, a national Government for national purposes; a local party for local purposes, a national party for national purposes. It is the very distinction characterizing our system of Government in which is lodged its greatest security—the leading, fundamental distinction by which we secure the largest liberty of the citizen, and at the same time the most effective agency for his protection. A party that in its organization and objects thus adopts the very spirit of our institutions, and plants itself upon a basis corresponding with that upon which rests the superstructure of the American Government, cannot but commend itself, as it has so often done, to the confidence of the people. By those who understand it, its triumphs can be traced to far deeper sources than that which has been so liberally insinuated in this discussion—the gullible ignorance of the masses.

Now, sir, under this view of the proper sphere and business of a national party, I can well conceive that, in the late canvass, northern Democrats may have expressed a repugnance to the establishment of slavery in Kansas, just as southern Democrats may have expressed a wish that it should be established there; for, differing in this, they nevertheless could cordially unite and act together upon their agreeing idea, that Congress has no commission to enforce the preference of either—no power to establish it, or to prevent it from being established; and therefore their wishes in the matter can have nothing to do with their party objects, and could not interfere with the result.

I repeat, sir, the Democratic party is neither pro-slavery nor anti-slavery. Not pro-slavery, because it has no business with the question; not anti-slavery, for the same reason. All it proposes on the subject is to recognize and protect the institution to the extent that the Constitution recognizes and protects it—nothing more, nothing less.

If gentlemen will take this fact into their minds, they will readily see that the bond of affiliation between northern and southern Democrats bears upon it only the great seal of the Constitution. That attests their common obligations—their obligations as coequals in a common Union. Their separate obligations, those which rest upon them as members of different States, confined each to his own, have no mention in the bond. They are excluded from it. They cannot properly get there. They are left as correlatives of those

powers "not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, [which] are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people."

Mr. Chairman, this fraternal war of Americans and Republicans upon the Democratic party, while sustained by a common enmity, is waged by movements to very opposite points. The Americans are seeking to destroy southern confidence in the party, while the Republicans are seeking to destroy northern confidence in it. The former would produce the belief that the southern people have been duped into the admission of Free-Soil allies to their camp; the latter, that the northern people have, to some extent, been duped into the admission of pro-slavery allies to theirs. The difference between them is, that, while the Americans readily accept such munitions as the Republicans are disposed to furnish for the southern field of operations, the latter, thus generous, because what they contribute can be of no avail to themselves, on the contrary would incur them, must move to their point of attack, carefully stripped of every piece of armor and every weapon which would serve the former. It would not suit them to show to their section, as it would suit the Americans to show to the South, that northern Democrats are advancing Free-Soil objects; and hence, when they have paraded newspaper paragraphs, and exhibited placards about "free Kansas," to furnish aid and comfort to our southern opponents, they stop short, wheel round, and charge that all this was intended to deceive the northern people, inasmuch as it is well known here that northern Democrats are really strengthening pro-slavery men and pro-slavery schemes.

It is evident, sir, that there is some mistake between them. It is equally evident to me that it arises from the party solicitude of Americans to fasten Free-Soil objects upon northern Democrats, and of Republicans to fasten pro-slavery objects upon them, when in fact neither is right—the truth being, as I have insisted, and as you have heard them declare here again and again, that they regard and treat the subject of slavery in the Territories as without the jurisdiction of Congress, where no opinion of theirs, whether for or against it, can rightfully be permitted to interfere one way or the other. How easy to avoid the mistake, if gentlemen would look at the facts directly, and not through a distorted medium! I rejoice to know that the people have the intelligence to use their own unclouded vision, and that they have wisely distinguished between individual preference and Federal governmental authority to enforce that preference—between a party of national scope and a party of State or territorial scope—between an opinion for practice and an opinion for Buncombe.

If the gentleman from Maryland will study more carefully wherein consists the unity and strength of the Democratic party, despite the diversities of opinion upon which he dwells, he may easily relieve himself from the fear he expresses—or perhaps it was a hope—that its dissolution is near at hand. That once proud and powerful party, as he styles it, he will find possessing elements of life which no breath of passion or prejudice can dissolve. It has little fear of its own for the future, and has been too often told by others that it was in a dying condition, to be

alarmed now by a repetition of the story. The gentleman does well, therefore, to amuse his fancy with graphic pictures of the scenes to be enacted around Mr. Buchanan when he shall come to take his position at the helm of State. It is a cheap gratification, but he must be content to enjoy it, as he is doing, only in fancy. Somehow or other, this unartistic, homebred, simple-minded, stubborn, self-willed, independent Democratic party, will go on successfully doing its own work in its own way, not dreaming that a laugh at its expense can affect or hinder the free course of its earnest, honest purpose. It feels more concern, however, when arraigned as a "disturber of the public peace," and I must tell the gentleman he is unkind in making such a charge after a solemn verdict of acquittal by the people—or, if he will have it so, after acquittal by the Constitution upon the finding of the people.

It is not difficult to see what the Republicans are aiming to accomplish by renewing their warfare upon the Democratic party. They have found it a stumbling-block in the way of their progress, resisting and checking the sectional animosity by which they are hurried on and governed; and in the hour of defeat they would gladly prepare the field for a better fortune in the future. But as to the Americans, led on by their chiefs from Kentucky and Maryland, [Messrs. H. MARSHALL and DAVIS,] I confess myself unable to discover what they are to accomplish, unless it be the mere gratification of party spite. Suppose them successful in establishing the unsoundness of northern Democrats in the view of the southern people: what follows? Anything from which they, as Union-loving men, can derive comfort? Anything upon which they can build a hope either for themselves or for the country? Take away these northern Democrats, and who are left? Who but Republicans? None, sir, save only a few straggling, powerless bands of Americans? And shall we look to their weakness for the strength, to their death for the life, which is to relieve us in such friendless desertion? But, join these Democrats in a common purpose with the Republicans, or in a purpose leading to the same end, and where are we then? The North against the South, united each, waiting only for the opportune moment, the full ripe season, to begin their deadly conflict. I can see no other result of that state of the northern mind, which will be shown when the Americans shall have established their charge. Let them prove it, and they have but proved that the South must soon yield to subjugation, or else that we are hastening to a convulsion from which there can be no escape—to a doom which will wrap up these States in a darkness the darkest. I do not envy them the satisfaction they are thus to achieve; nor do I appreciate the simply querulous tone, sometimes flippant tone, in which they speak of this state of things, when it is one that should bury all thought or speech, if not in despair, in the one sole, stern resolve to prepare a readiness for the worst.

I will not argue with the gentleman upon the justice and propriety of the removal of the Missouri restriction. It is bad enough to have that to do with the avowed friends of the Republican party. But that a southern man, whatever may have been his views of the expediency of the

measure at the time, should join them now in deprecating and denouncing it, in the face of the braggart spirit which warns his section that its day of peace shall come no more till anti-slavery vengeance shall have accomplished its work, and notwithstanding the purpose of the measure to restore equality of right to the people he represents, is more than passing strange. It borders upon the fatal step which plunges into the angry flood to become a part of its wild-rushing, destructive power. No, sir; in a time like this, and upon such a subject, I prefer to use the little strength I have, not in a contest with collaterals, but in resisting the legitimate chiefs of the anti-slavery movement.

I hear much said by these about the overweening desire of the South to extend her political power—about the restless ambition with which she grasps for the control of the Federal Government. You hear it in this Hall every day, and it is worth our while to inquire what amount of truth there is in the charge. What do gentlemen mean by such an accusation? That the South seeks to gain power antagonistic to any end for which the Union was formed? That she has objects of her own to accomplish which conflict with the true objects of our Government, and cannot be attained without detriment to other portions of the Union? This must be the idea. No one would wish to be considered as objecting to any natural or proper growth of her strength. It is, then, a charge that her aim and efforts are directed to her own aggrandizement for her own peculiar purposes, as opposed to purposes right in themselves, and held in proper regard by all the other States. Is this true?

Why, Mr. Chairman, the extremest of southern statesmen, so far as I know, have never gone further than to insist that a balance between the sections should be preserved in the Senate; and this, not with a view to give undue weight to southern influence, but to secure southern institutions against external interference. An equality in the Senate could give no superior power there; and even if it should, through the ascendancy of individuals of the body, there would always be a check in this House, where the free States can never be deprived of their large majority of Representatives. To acquire and keep this much, therefore, the utmost that is asked, would confer no ability to shape the public policy at will, much less to shape it to any exclusive sectional end. It would only furnish reliable security against the superior power of the other side—a security which would never have been thought necessary or desirable if the same could have been found in the kindly, fraternal sentiment which our fathers hoped would bind us together indissolubly.

You perceive, sir, that it is ability for defense which is sought by this proposition. Had there been no outcry against our institutions; had there been no scheming to interfere with them, no attempted restrictions to familiarize the mind with attacks upon them, no hostile prejudice nursed and disseminated against them, the South would have reposed in quiet contentment, careless of the distribution of political power, because proudly confident of justice to herself under any distribution, however unequal. This desire for equality of power, not for full equality, but only for that in one branch of the legislative department

of the Government, which will enable her to feel secure of protection for the rights of her citizens, proceeds from no over-ambitious motive. What has she done to authorize any suspicion of such a motive? She asks but to be let alone. Any right she claims is claimed as already existing from the adoption of the Constitution, and not as a new gift. In all that she has said, or demanded, or done, if honestly and fairly construed, you find her looking only to the defensive. Power to resist aggression is the utmost she would have through the action of this Government; and this not by positive aid, but by free, equal, uninvincible permission to take her chances for a share of the common territory. Satisfy her people that you do not mean war upon their institutions, and even that much no one would seriously care for. I am sure, sir, there would have been no disposition on her part to set aside the Missouri line—although almost universally believed to have been wrongly imposed—if she had not been continually harassed by hostile efforts to deprive her of an equal right in the country south of that line. And it is in these efforts the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. BINGHAM] will find the explanation of that seeming departure from the precedents since 1820, to which he refers in support of his assertion of unlimited congressional power over slavery in the Territories. While there was a hope that that line would be respected by others, the South was willing to let it remain; and any action of hers, or of her statesmen, acquiescing in its terms, north or south of the line, was based upon that willingness thus induced, and not upon absolute approval of the line itself, or acknowledgment of the power to establish it. She has been provoked to reassert the equal rights of her citizens, and then, forsooth, is held chargeable with grasping ambition! She gets back what she has lost, and is held responsible as a wicked aggressor.

It is simply a misrepresentation of the South to say that she strives for more power than enough to protect and preserve herself. She has not the folly to suppose she can ever acquire even an equality of power with the North, nor has she any especial desire for it, except, as I have said, for defensive purposes. If there were no danger that the power of the North, instead of being used solely for the common good, would be used to strike her—if the course of events had permitted her to rest secure in the belief that there was no purpose to array the General Government upon a policy of discrimination against her—if, in short, she did not see that enmity to her institutions was ripening itself for a breach into their stronghold, she would have no concern as to the extent to which that power might surpass her own. It will be apparent to any one who will take the trouble to understand her position, that any anxiety she manifests to maintain a partial equality of political power, is the anxiety of a weaker party to guard itself against abusive treatment by the stronger. How far removed from an aggressive spirit! And yet, this is made a ground upon which to arraign her for cherishing an unholy lust for power.

But gentlemen take offense at the President for justifying this southern sense of insecurity, which he does by pointing to the revolutionary tendency of recent organizations founded on anti-

slavery sentiment; and they would persuade us that no blow is aimed at our institutions, and that we do wrong to suspect them of harmful designs. Mr. Channan, they deceive themselves, or are trying to deceive us. Even the gentleman from Maryland [Mr. DAVIS] will tell them that. If they are innocent of mischievous intention, they are none the less working to mischievous ends. They are indulging a habit of thought in condemnation of slavery, which, as it grows upon them, becomes more and more eager for expression in practical action. They are ever feeding a prejudice, which becomes proportionably restless of restraint the more it is pampered. They are following the track of a single idea, till it is leading them to a point beyond which the tyranny of the mind will permit no turning aside, nor any turning back. They are obeying a law of progress, the same that poor human nature obeys when yielding to temptation in some weak point, abandoning principle and virtue for some temporary gratification, it finds itself more easily misled a second time, and ever afterwards, until it is finally driven to adopt the society and the practices of the dissolute. It might be profitable for them to remember that

"Vice is a monster of so frightful mien
As, to be hated, needs but to be seen;
Yet, seen too oft, familiar with her face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace."

If abolitionism be the vice from which they have been shrinking, it is nevertheless abolitionism they are enduring, pitying, almost embracing. The history of the northern wing of the old Whig party, its gradual absorption into sectionalism, is instructive and full of warning on this point; and so is the history of those men of the Democratic party, who, first yielding to erroneous views of the power of Congress over slavery, have gone on till they, too, are urging the demands of sectionalism. Thus is their progress. They march on, and deny that they march—march on again, and still deny that they march; and, if not reformed by an awakened sense of the dangers of their evil course, will continue till the end is before them with all its horrors.

The leading Abolitionists understand this better, and congratulated themselves accordingly upon the complexion of the late canvass. Hence you hear Gerrit Smith saying, that the few radical Abolitionists "who refuse to vote for Colonel Frémont are, after all, to be numbered among the most effective supporters of his election;" leave them, therefore, "to ply the public mind with their radical doctrines, and then," "however they shall vote, Colonel Frémont will have been a great gainer;" and Wendell Phillips saying, that the Republican is "the first sectional party ever organized in this country. It does not know its own face, and it calls itself national; but it is not national—it is sectional. It is the North arrayed against the South;" and Garrison saying, when he gave his "judgment of the Republican party," that in "proportion to the growth of disunionism will be the growth of Republicanism and Free-Soilism," and that an examination of the map of Massachusetts would show "that in those places where there are the most Abolitionists who have disfranchised themselves for conscience and for the slave's sake, the heaviest vote is thrown for the Free-Soil ticket." These men, standing

forward, thus hail the coming on of their co-workers. They are patient with any reluctance they witness; for, if the march is slow, still there is progress, and they feel assured their waiting will be rewarded.

The South is not mistaken. The leaders of the Republican party have let loose a wild spirit against her which they cannot control if they would; and if it does not exhaust itself in its furious conflict with the better spirit of their section, its career of mischief is but begun, for it treads a path that leads through "burning cities, and ravaged fields, and slaughtered populations." Our only hope is, that as in the past, so in the future, the Democratic party will stand as a firm barrier to meet and check the danger—that as the solid rock receives the surging wave and dashes it into spray, so will that party receive and embody the encroaching tide of anti-slavery fanaticism.

The excuses urged for disturbing our peace are not of a kind to weaken our conviction that a great wrong is threatened. Are we reminded, as by the gentleman from Ohio, [Mr. BINGHAM,] of the excellency of freedom, and censured that we smother it in the oppressions and outrages of slavery? This imports nothing less than that slavery should be extinguished, and, whether we will or not, extinguished by those who have a better understanding of its injustice than we have. Do we hear lamentations over the condition of the negro? The inference is inevitable that the negro should be relieved, and, as we will not relieve him, that it should be done by others who are more humane. Is the condition of the white man in the slave States deplored? You cannot resist the idea that something more is meant than idle wailing. Are we upbraided that the South is inert, stagnant, desolate, unskilled in the movements of the age, and withal blind and presumptuous? Who can believe that the painting of such a picture for our inspection has no other end than to gratify our tastes, or mortify our vanity?

It answers no purpose to show that all such excuses for harassing us are founded in a vicious philanthropy, or in mistaken views of the life and condition of the South. A visionary love of freedom prevents the access of correct knowledge, and colors the one fact of slavery with a blackness that darkens all else. For instance, what would it avail to show to the Free-Soil partisan that the South is not, as he insists, lying under a blight of desolation—that she has, in fact, multiplied her population, both white and black, multiplied her schools, her colleges, her churches, her railroads, her productions, her commerce, her wealth, at a rate unapproached in the history of progress, except by her sister States—that her older States, notwithstanding they have contributed largely, even lavishly, to the building up of her newer ones, some of which have outstripped them, have grown and strengthened and improved the condition of their people steadily, through every decade? A mere glance at the census will exhibit these facts; and yet they weigh nothing in the minds of those who decry our institutions. The free States having progressed more rapidly in some respects, they look only to this, fill their minds with an exaggerated contrast, and exalt themselves to a superiority which their great modesty forbids them to attribute

to anything but the bad influence of slavery. If they could be led to imagine for a moment that there is no North, or could forget her existence while looking elsewhere, then perhaps they would be able to discover that the progress of the South has been constant, rapid, grand, wonderful; and that there is much to admire and commend in the growth of her feeble colonies into a mighty empire, in the march of her bold pioneers through the wilderness, hewing the way for the approach of other States with their standards of civilization, their emblems of greatness, and their armories of power, and in the energy and hardy industry with which she has advanced the fruits of her soil into an unexampled controlling magnitude in the commerce and markets of the world. But all this is shut out from their point of vision. Why? Because they are absorbed with enmity to our institutions, and with the self-complacent idea that their own should be forced in to supplant them; because they are being led captive by a habit of mind which concerns itself only with war upon slavery, and which will not be satisfied to release them short of its extermination.

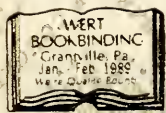
The President is right, Mr. Chairman. Those who have joined the Free-Soil movement have "entered into a path which leads nowhere, unless it be to civil war and disunion, and which has no other possible outlet." To believe otherwise is to believe that the South will submit to

all that she holds to be wrong, unjust, unconstitutional, and destructive.

When I contemplate the arraying of a strong party, bent upon giving the direction to northern power, dictated by the prevalent anti-slavery sentiment, and unmindful of the high guarantees by which southern rights were meant to be secured, and can find no opposing organization but that of the Democratic party of sufficient strength to withstand its aggressive purposes, it cannot be surprising that I should indulge the pride of a partisan in the result of the recent election. What is it, in fact, but the pride of patriotism? A great calamity to the country has been arrested—arrested by my party, and shall I not join the President in words of satisfaction that it is so? With all my heart I do. I shall accept the triumph as the promise of a still hopeful future, trusting that the incoming counsels will be ruled by the wisdom, discretion, and courage so much needed to keep down the adversary, and to perpetuate the power which conquers usurpation and wrong. But should this trust fail, and the sectional party continue to grow, then—but I will not speak despondingly. Even then it may be that a higher wisdom would but prepare to enforce anew the old lesson—

"Jove strikes the Titans down,
Not when they set about their mountain piling,
But when another rock would crown their work."





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